BEST Copy Available

UNCLASSIFIED

8338756 R

E-625

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

DEC 19 1983

CONFIDENTIAL

'83 DEC 19 P3:34

TO: The Secretary

FROM: EUR - Richard Burt

SUBJECT: Raoul Wallenberg

In March 1944 Raoul Wallenberg volunteered to undertake a mission in Budapest funded by the United States War Refugee Board to save Hungarian Jews. Between March 1944 and January 1945, Wallenberg labored courageously and saved perhaps 100,000 lives. The last confirmed sighting of the Swede was on January 17, 1945 when he and his driver went to meet with the Soviet military command to discuss relief efforts. He was taken into custody at that time and imprisoned by the Soviets.

The Swedish government undertook sporadic efforts between 1945 and 1957 to locate Wallenberg, but the Soviets denied any knowledge of his whereabouts. Finally, in 1957, then-Deputy Foreign Minister Gromyko provided the Swedes with a memorandum stating that Wallenberg had been imprisoned and had died of a heart attack in Lubyanka prison on July 17, 1947. His remains were said to have been cremated and the responsible officials had supposedly died. No explanation of Wallenberg's arrest was provided, but the memorandum did convey an apology. The US had been in close contact with the Swedes about Wallenberg since 1945, but in accordance with Swedish wishes and international practice, we did not initiate any action on this case. The Swedes continued to raise the case throughout the 1960s with Khrushchev and Kosygin, among others.

In July 1979, however, the US informed the Soviets of our interest in the case and requested details clarifying his fate. A July 1980 Soviet response contended that all information on Wallenberg had already been provided and that the matter was closed. Under Secretary Stoessel raised the case with Dobrynin in 1981, in conformity with the legislation conferring honorary American citizenship on Wallenberg. Dobrynin responded that reports that Wallenberg was alive were false, that he was familiar with the case and did not need another piece of paper, and that he could state with full authority and responsibility that Wallenberg had died years ago. He refused the note.

[illegible] submitted a Congressional resolution on [illegible] Union will probably be returned. We [illegible] in international forums, such as [illegible] mission.

BEST Copy Available

UNCLASSIFIED

FOIA Exemptions ( ) CLASSIFY as ( ) S or ( ) C Sec ( ) DOWNGRADE to ( ) S or ( ) C TS authority to ( ) DECLASSIFY ( ) DECLASSIFY IN PART ( ) RELEASE ( ) EXCISE ( ) DENY E.O. Citations

UNCLASSIFIED

The following additional actions have been proposed:

-- Wallenberg Freedom Award: The President approved this award, to be administered jointly with Sweden. The Swedes rejected the idea on the grounds it might be seen as an admission that Wallenberg is dead. They also fear that the care would become swept up in the context of East-West polemics.

-- Presidential Directive: A private US group proposed a Presidential Directive ordering all executive branch elements to give priority attention to the Wallenberg case, especially in diplomatic and international broadcasting contexts.

-- High-level Demarches: The US public and Congress remain committed to the issue and expect it to be discussed with the Soviets "at the highest levels."

-- Spy Swaps: This idea has been frequently proposed. Sweden did try (unsuccessfully) to trade a Swedish citizen convicted of spying for the Soviets.

-- Submarine Swaps: In the first submarine incident off the Swedish coast, the government did not choose to pursue the Wallenberg angle. In the second incident, the Soviet submarine escaped.

In any U.S. approach, we must bear in mind the Swedish government insistence that this is a Swedish problem and that Sweden has the lead role. We have always respected that position; the grant of honorary American citizenship to Raoul Wallenberg does not provide us with any additional rights under international law. We must be equally careful in evaluating reports that Wallenberg is still alive. The numerous claims of sightings since 1947 are neither consistent nor confirmed. Publicly, we say we are unconvinced by the Soviet explanation, but that we have been unable to substantiate reports that he is alive. In fact, it is unlikely Wallenberg has survived. Gromyko's personal involvement in the case also complicates matters. So long as he and his cohorts make up the leadership, the Soviets are unlikely to be more forthcoming.

While immediate favorable developements are unlikely, we should keep searching for appropriate opportunities to raise the Wallenberg issue. The opening of the CDE in Stockholm next month provides such an opportunity in a symbolically important venue. If you meet with Gromyko, we could pursue the matter on the margins of your meeting, assuming the Swedes have no objections. If you are interested in this idea, we will begin to staff it out.

UNCLASSIFIED

"but no decision on what to do until I see staff paper"

but no decision on what to do until I see staff

UNCLASSIFIED

noble spirits." He suggested the U.N. Human Rights Commission's Working Group on Disappearances be authorized to "make a renewed search and a full report" on the case.

We continue to work closely with the Swedish Government to investigate reports alleging that Mr. Wallenberg might still be alive. Thus far, we have been unable to substantiate this information. Nevertheless, we will maintain a cooperative effort with the Swedish Government and other interested parties to seek information that will clarify the fate of this brave man.

On August 3, 1983, Edward J. Derwinski, Counselor of the Department, testified in Congress on the subject of Raoul Wallenberg. As he stated then, "Our position has remained consistent and clear. Until the Soviets provide a full clarification of Wallenbery's fate, the United States will not accept as final the Soviet assurances that Wallenberg died in 1947 ... I can assure you categorically that this matter will be raised again in every appropriate forum."

Sincerely,

John Hughes
Assistant Secretary
for Public Affairs and
Department Spokesman

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

drafted: EUR/SOV:JMOrdway
12/15/83 x28670 (8372B)

cleared: EUR/SOV:JFSchumaker
EUR/SOV:TWSimons
EUR/NE:DFinnerty
EUR:MPalmer
HA:JBuncher

UNCLASSIFIED